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BEING A BRITISHER'S VIEW CONCERNING INDIA

T. L. CROMBIE

With a Foreword
by Annie Besant

Theosophical Publishing House
Adyar, Madras, India
1917

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Adyar, Madras, India

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BY

T. L. CROMBIE, B.A.,
BARR.-AT-LAW

WITH A FOREWORD BY ANNIE BESANT

(*Second Edition*)

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FOREWORD

It is with a peculiar pleasure that I recommend this booklet alike to Indian and to British readers, for it is written by a Briton, by one in whom the heart of England beats under tropical skies as in the greyness of his northern home, one who does not let the glamour of palm, of banyan, and of tamarind veil the love of liberty and of justice, bred among the oaks and elms of his native land.

He finds that here in India the "longing for liberty, this growing passion for Self-Government . . . has begun to burst through the limits that were considered to be desirable by the British race," "a New India has begun to create itself". Why should "the Land of the Free" look doubtfully on a country striving to be free? Is it the "certain contempt" felt by the white man for the coloured? Is it because the wealth of India has proved too useful to be lightly surrendered? But if so, Britain must never again preach liberty, nor make promises that she does not fulfil.

Such is the spirit in which our author considers the problem of England and India.

The value of English literature as a key to the understanding of England is considered, and a plea for the best English books in school and college urged, while Indians are asked to create an Indian literature written in English, which shall reveal the soul of India. The student of history ponders the present

position; what is to be the outcome? The steady refusal of Congress demands during thirty years makes a black page in the Empire's history. What shall be written on the next page? England's history shows two policies; one worked out into the United States; the other into South Africa.

Education is next dealt with, and then the position of women, and then an interesting parallel is drawn between the suffrage movement in England, and the demand of educated Indians here. The suffragist worked quietly, and her claim was disregarded; then she began to be troublesome, and she was imprisoned, brutally treated, tortured; she was no longer deceived by promises, she claimed her right. So India has been working quietly for freedom, and has been answered by reaction. In both cases the reactionaries were English. Then, suddenly, those same reactionaries sprang to arms to defend Belgium! Why? because they understood the wrong to Belgium, but understood neither the women nor the Indians, being systematically deceived about both by their Press. There is much truth in this, and hence it is necessary to enlighten England. Not Governments; they know all about both matters, and fight on the side of the reactionaries, for a privileged sex and privileged race. The appeal must be made to the maker of Governments, to the English Democracy. "Once get the British Nation convinced of the rightness of a thing, and that thing will be accomplished. The abolition of the Slave Trade was a case in point. Home Rule for India will be another."

Go forth, little book, born of a Britisher's love of liberty, and do thy gracious work.

ANNIE BESANT

TO

J. N. D.

A BROTHER OF THE EAST

PREFACE

THE first six chapters of this book were published as separate papers in *The Commonweal*. The remaining three are new. They are written by one who has mixed largely with Indians for some years and has had special opportunities of hearing the opinions which come from their hearts, but are too often checked on the lips. Liberty is a gift which may not be denied at any time to a civilised country—still less should obstacles be raised by a country like Britain, whose watchwords are Liberty and Justice. It is the earnest hope of the author that, after reading these pages, some may be interested enough to follow the subject further and peruse the Reports of the Indian National Congress in which are written indelibly the grievances under which India labours, and which tell the sad story of just demands refused. Each denial of Justice is a blot on the fair fame of Britain, each curtailment of Liberty sullies her honour. But the tale of broken pledges may yet be wiped out, if only the British people will take the trouble to realise what India suffers. In their ignorance lies her suffering. Through their knowledge will be born her glory.

T. L. C.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Two years have passed since this little book was written, and in these two years India has progressed more rapidly than had seemed possible. The European War, which still goes on, has been a time of quickening for the whole world. Consequently in some ways the views expressed by me in 1915 are necessarily a little antiquated in 1917, but as the main idea of the book remains the same, and the purpose for which it was written is not yet wrought, I have decided to leave it unaltered.

T. L. C.

Adyar

December, 1917

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England's conduct in India is in strange contrast with almost any other country. Owing to the false groove in which she is moving, she does violence to her own best instincts. She sympathises with and helps every nationality that struggles for a constitutional representative Government. On the one hand, she is the parent of, and maintains, the highest constitutionalism, and on the other, she exercises a clear and, though thoughtlessly, a despoiling despotism in India . . . .

1880 —DADABHAI NAOROJI

It is said that we are intoxicated with the new wine of freedom, that Locke and Milton, Fox and Burke, Bright and Macaulay have unsettled our minds. But those who say so take no account of the Time Spirit against which the Olympian Gods must fight in vain. I trust I am no dreamer of dreams; but I see that what is passing before us is a social and political evolution. You may guide it, but you cannot arrest it, any more than you can make to-day like yesterday.

1907 —RASH BEHARI GHOSE

The days of the lotus-eater are gone, the world is swinging onward on the uplifting ropes of time, and in Europe, the war of nations, now in progress, will knock off the last weights of mediæval domination of one man over many, of one race over another; it is not possible to roll back the tide of wider life which is flowing like the warm Gulf Stream through the gateways of the West into the still waters of the East. You may abolish the study of English history and draw a sponge over all its enthralling story of freedom; you may bar Milton and Burke, Mill and Spencer; you may bend the Indian Universities to your will if you like, fetter their feet with obstructive statutes, but you cannot bar the imponderable influences of an expanding world.

1914 —BHUPENDRANATH BASU

I

THEORY v. PRACTICE

IMITATION has been described as the sincerest form of flattery, but even in imitation there must be tact exercised, if one wishes to flatter really successfully. The above reflection applies to instances which occur around us every day, but may be stretched far beyond the realms of concrete fact to the world of ideas. So long as imitation is kept within suitable bounds, so long as the imitator does not encroach on what his model considers private and inalienable rights, all is well. But imitation, when carried to too great an extent, has an irritating effect, and there is always a danger that the imitator may be a person of some initiative, leave off the habit of slavish imitation, and begin to produce creative work, in the end performing better work than his master.

This preamble is not so irrelevant as it may seem at first sight to the subject I am about to discuss. The general title which has been given to this and succeeding papers has been specially given to include within its scope the general effect that the development of English literature and history and ideas have exercised on the Indian mind. The gradual but steady growth of England, the land of the Free, which Indians have had to study in various ways, has aroused in many of them the desire to develop their own country and nation on similar lines, *mutatis mutandis*, and to inspire their fellow-countrymen with the glorious ideal of

liberty, of which Great Britain stands as a shining example.

And it is here that we find a growing difficulty, for with this longing for liberty, this growing passion for Self-Government gradually spreading throughout the country, India's spirit of imitation has begun to burst through the limits that were considered to be desirable by the British race.

India is in a very peculiar, an almost unique, position. She is a country subject to foreign domination, but—and this is the remarkable phenomenon—subject practically though not theoretically to a nation whose watchword is freedom, a nation which has by its own efforts established its right to govern its own affairs, choose its own leaders; established this right by bitter struggles and much self-sacrifice, by agitation and at times by bloodshed. Is it wonderful, then, that India, falling under the domination of such a nation, looks on it with a spirit of reverence, senses the idea of liberty which pulses in every Englishman's heart, and yearns for the day when the same feeling may pulse through *her* heart, and she too, may take her place as one of the Self-Governing units that compose the British Empire. She recognises the right of Britain to be *primus inter pares*, for it is Britain which has diffused in many lands the ideal of liberty, but she feels within herself an inner strength which must find expression and can be no longer held down. A New India has begun to create itself.

But, after all, Britain is fallible. The idea of liberty which is her cherished jewel, and the light of which she has rayed among the peoples of the territories which she has conquered or "annexed," must be realised only gradually in the subject races of India. The power of liberty, she argues—and with some justice, for she fought hard for it—must not be lightly bestowed on a country which she considers unready, and therefore India must not progress too rapidly in that direction.

This policy would be admirable, if one did not suspect that—in the particular instance which we are considering—under it lay two factors which have in them rather flourishing germs of selfishness. These two factors are the colour-bar and the wealth of India.

I have put the colour-bar first, as it seems to me that the second factor arises from it. Among the distinctly "white" nations of the world, there exists a certain contempt for their brothers of darker hue. It has arisen from many causes, some justifiable, most unjustifiable, which cannot be discussed just now, but there it is. If India had been a western nation, and fallen under the domination of England, I venture to think her treatment would have been very different. The second factor, the wealth of India, most of which is diverted from its legitimate and just goal—India herself—has been extremely useful in providing for many Englishmen the source of comfortable independence, has increased the revenues of England, and has proved too useful lightly to be set aside.

Side by side with these factors, we have to reckon with this fact: England has come to India, full of her ideals of liberty and Self-Government. India has been fired with these ideals, and the fire, orginally perhaps a spark, is gradually becoming fanned into a flame with a will and purpose of its own. This spark, kindled in the first place by admiration and its concomitant, imitation, was in the nature of flattery to the British. It flattered their self-esteem. But the spark has become a flame; it glows no longer with reflected light; it is impregnated with life and initiative; it is inspired with the spirit of the East; it demands freedom as a right.

Can England, then, who has given it to those Colonies inhabited by the descendants of her sons—aye, and even in South Africa—in whose hearts was set the seal of liberty, deny to India that Self-Government which is the inalienable right of every civilised people, simply because the skin of the Indian is brown instead of

white, and because the wealth of India is too valuable to be relinquished? If so, she must never again preach liberty. She must never again promise, as in 1858, and then delay so long in the performance of her pledges as to suggest that she means to repudiate them.

For England *has* preached liberty. Her history and literature are witnesses; and the greatest boon that she has conferred on the Indian people is the means to study that history and literature and to draw from them the inspiration that has made her great. But when this same Indian people show the desire to embody in concrete form the inspiration they have thus received—England hesitates.

II

A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

It has been said that England has preached liberty. Wherever her sons have gone, they have taken with them the tradition of their Motherland, and both by their speech and individual action embodied the ideal which is at once their heritage and their glory. One feels that the spirit of the Englishman-to-be beat in the heart of that great Apostle of the Christ, S. Paul, who, when interrogated as to whether he were a free citizen of the Roman Empire or not, replied: "I was free born." And it is this very atmosphere which surrounds every son of England and makes itself felt wherever he goes. So, when England came to India, and occupied it, finally incorporating this ancient land as a part of the British Empire, an inevitable result occurred. The West and the East were met together at last. True, they kept as far as possible to their own individual spheres, but necessarily at times these spheres overlapped.

It was, of course, a foregone conclusion that the occupation of India involved the necessity for the universality throughout the country of the English language. This was well for India, where so many different languages are spoken. It gave a basis of unity for the future Indian Nation, as well as for instructing the sons of India in a language more universally known throughout the world than any other. English thus became the official language, though naturally every Indian knows his own vernacular. But

if an Indian wishes to be of any practical service to his country he must know English thoroughly; for it means that he can then have intercourse with the white race, and free exchange of opinion with other Indians who come from distant parts of India and speak a different vernacular.

The great value, then, of the spread of the knowledge of the English language lies in its unificatory power, for it is a medium of expression common to all Indians.

One could wish, however, that the full benefits accruing from a knowledge of English, were present in India. One feels deeply that the speaking of a common tongue should have done much to promote friendly and understanding relations between Indian and Englishman, breaking down the artificial barriers of colour and caste. These barriers form a problem by its nature very difficult of solution, but it must be realised that in the solution both nations must take part, for both nations are in fault.

"The proper study of mankind is man," Pope once said, but he forgot to mention, intentionally or not, that in the study, a certain equilibrium of mind and much tolerance must be exercised. If the Indian is to understand the Englishman properly, he must see him at home, enter into his life as far as possible, and then he will understand what the Englishman really is. In India this is almost impossible. Where, even if he desire it, is he admitted to an Englishman's bangalow on friendly and intimate terms, as an absolute equal? In very few places—and even where he might be so received, he feels suspicious. Who shall blame him? To go to England and study the Englishman in his native land is also practically an impossibility for most Indians, so their view of the Englishman, however well disposed they may be towards their white brothers, is apt to be but partially true.

Now, with a common medium for the exchange of ideas and thoughts in the form of the English language,

this ought not to have been so. The time that has passed since the coming of the English ought to have been sufficient to establish a more intimate relationship between the two countries. The Indian is of course loyal, and admires—perhaps fears a little—his white brother. He feels his disabilities all the more keenly since he is treated as if belonging to a subject race. "Perfect love casteth out fear," we are told, but the love is not yet perfect.

How then is the Indian, who has had no opportunity of going to England, to understand the Englishman as a man, not as a ruler; as an equal, not as a superior; as a friend, without suspicion? He should have been able to do so by mixing with the English in India. This, however, has been made practically impossible. What other way is open to him? English Literature.

The literature of a country reflects its soul, it represents the people as they are, it voices their aspirations, embodies their ideals. And in the literature of the English, the Indian may mentally become acquainted with the average Englishman as he is—full of faults and foibles doubtless, but with many redeeming qualities—and as he would be.

It may very well be said that these remarks, with the necessary changes, might be applied to the Englishman, who, failing to understand the Indian, should study Indian literature, and learn from it what the Indian really is. It must be remembered, however, that a good knowledge of Indian literature would involve the acquisition of many vernaculars, for which the busy man has little time or use; even if translations of these were available, a translation loses much of the power and vitality of the original. The glory of Indian literature lies, moreover, in the sacred writings of the past, admirably rendered into English by the Oriental scholars of the West—but to understand the Indian of to-day, the Englishman cannot base his judgment on writings of great antiquity, however much they have played, and may play, a part in influencing him.

The above is somewhat of a digression, but the character of Indian and English literature seems to me so different that a parallel between them can scarcely be validly maintained. With regard to this, however, there is one point to which the Indian might pay a little more attention than he has hitherto shown—the use he can make of his knowledge of English to benefit his country. We have said that a valid parallel cannot be established between the literatures of England and India, but why let that state of affairs occur? If Indians wish to be understood by their brothers in England, they should give to them the facilities which they themselves have enjoyed. Create an Indian literature, written in English, which shall reflect the soul of a people, the soul of a United India, showing the conditions of the people, voicing their hopes and aspirations. The literature must be good, so that it will compel the attention of the English; and once having done that, it must inevitably tend to produce a better understanding between the two peoples. It can be done. We have instances before us in the work of Sir Rabindranath Tagore and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. To the former, one of the highest honours that Europe can give has been given —the Nobel Prize—and it has been said that two names were presented to the Trustees for consideration, Sir Rabindranath, and Mr. Roosevelt, and the choice fell on the Indian. Surely there are others who will follow in the wake of these distinguished Indian pioneers. The time is ripe for the creation of this new literature which will be such a strong weapon in gaining the Self-Government that India prays for. A way is thus also opened up to secure nearer reforms —wider systems of education and social reform. The Indian newspapers, it is true, devote columns for this purpose, and thus exercise a useful influence; but the new literature would be read by the English public who are sadly indifferent to Indian journals, and are apt to mould their opinions on Indian affairs as they are represented by their countrymen in India—views almost necessarily prejudiced and often unjust. But

the new literature may do just the work that the Indian journal has failed to do, and rouse the British to a sense of their responsibilities.

To return once more to the study of English literature by the Indian: Recently many faults have been found with the English books set for examinations in Indian schools and colleges, as not being really representative of British life and character. The speeches of Burke are out of favour, perhaps; the essays of Macaulay are crossed off from the list of books for study, maybe. The work of Charlotte Yonge finds a place, where that of George Eliot is crowded out. The verse of Mrs. Hemans will, perchance, be found to be more suitable for the Indian student than the poetry of Shelley or Keats. Such are the murmurings we hear, suppressed at first, and then growing louder and louder. It is all a great pity; because there has grown up a feeling amongst Indians—let us hope it is not justified—that the books which find a place in the English curriculum of schools and colleges are chosen with a view to suppressing the individualistic tendency and liberty of thought which finds expression in the best English authors.

For the proper study of literature the student must put himself in touch with the current of English thought and life, and not only confine himself to the study of style. Stevenson's *Virginibus Puerisque* is quite harmless in its ideas and, as regards style, unimpeachable, and for that alone it might well be chosen, since style must not be neglected. But style is not the only thing that the student of a foreign language wishes to acquire. He wants to penetrate the soul of a people. There lies the value of the study of a literature foreign to one's own. What would the student of Greek gain, if he only appreciated the form, and was left unmoved by the thought that underlay the form? So with English. There are plenty of thoughtful and inspiring writers, whose English is beyond reproach—nay more, even

classical; these should be the ones that are taught to Indian students.

Anyone, who knows anything of education, recognises the value in after-life of a book which has been thoroughly and well taught in school or college. The plays of Shakespeare, thus learned, are re-read by the man with greater pleasure after his student days, probably, than any plays which he reads without having had such assistance. So with all the best literature. It is therefore of paramount importance that the best and most representative English literature should be taught in Indian schools and colleges —if the English really wish that Indians should understand and love them. If the ideas of liberty, independence, Self-Government, and individualism inspire the best writings in English and nerve the Englishmen to deeds of greater glory, why should they be withheld from India? They cannot be withheld for ever; for the Indian student has learned the English language, and therefore the whole world of English literature is open to him whithersoever he may desire to go. He can read these books—he will probably read them, after he has left college—but as his mind passes back to his school and college days, how can he but remember that he has lost, for ever, the benefit of the instruction that might have been his; that he received then the "milk for babes," instead of the "strong meat" for men, which is the right of every British subject.

This has been put perhaps more strongly than the present state of affairs in Indian schools and colleges warrants—but prevention is better than cure, and if one observes a tendency towards a wrong course, it is surely better to utter a protest and try to check that tendency before it broadens out into a sweeping current which is impossible to stem.

If, indeed, it is a fact that only by foreign travel or the study of English literature, the Indian may get to know really well and sympathetically the character

and habits of the race which is set over him, then the majority of Indians must perforce turn to the literature, and in that literature there exists a silver thread, the thread of history, which shines with the splendour of liberty and cannot be rusted.

The story of England's greatness lies there; her struggles for liberty and independence are writ in indelible letters; and yet when England might bid India "go and do likewise"—England hesitates.

III

IDEALS IN HISTORY

WE learn from the study of a nation's history, perhaps better than in any other way, for what that nation stands, what ideals govern it, and whither it is tending. But in order to do this correctly, we must learn to study rightly. History has for convenience sake been divided into several broad divisions, *e.g.*, Political History, Constitutional History, Economic History, etc., etc. These divisions necessarily overlap, and the student must be careful not to enclose them into watertight compartments. One must learn to gain the "historic sense," and then one can appreciate with approximate correctness the relative values of the facts which history sets down, and can discern the general ideas and principles running through the centuries that have shaped the course of a nation's destiny. It may not be the academic view, but to me it appeals as a true view, that history but records and registers the working out of national ideas. Certain ideas grip the nation as a whole, and the translation of these into concrete manifestation is history.

The main tendency that may be observed running through the whole of British history is the tendency towards liberty—the liberty of the individual as far as is compatible with the individual's duty towards the State. But because the male population, as a whole, have a voice in the Government of the State, affairs may be adjusted in a way which is suited to the

majority of the people. It is not my purpose here to give an account of how England has secured her freedom. This can be read in any good history book. The gradual steps by which the people asserted themselves, the demands made of King or Parliament, and carried sometimes by force; the struggles for the extension of the franchise; the battle for religious toleration; the winning of freedom for the Press—all these things are written down and may be read by every one. But the question may be asked: "How has Britain gained these privileges?" The answer is, of course, by united determination.

Britain owes a great deal to her size and to her geographical position which have made her people insular, perhaps arrogant, but have made it possible for her to settle her affairs without much interference from abroad. Her position also has saved her at a critical time from coming entirely under the dominion of the Church of Rome, and thus being brought into line with the other States of Europe. As it were by some miraculous intervention, when her fate hung in the balance on two occasions, a great tempest came on the sea, and the threatened invasion of a foreign Power was thwarted.

It seems almost as if Britain had been specially kept apart to work out her own destiny, solve great problems and offer the solution to the world. The area of the Islands that compose the United Kingdom is quite negligible—yet within that small space have been fostered the feelings of Nationality and Unity. Love of Liberty, Love of Justice, Love of Country—might well be called the trinity of the Englishman's faith. For more than nine centuries no war, save civil war, has stained the land of England with blood, and she has been free to develop it.

Yet the isolated position of Britain has not been without disadvantages. Spared from the horror of foreign invasion, she has had to forego to a large extent some of the lessons that most of the countries of Europe have learned by bitter experience.

It is a difficult task for a country, which feels secure, to enter wholly into the miseries of her less fortunate neighbours. There is a tendency in such a country to go on calmly, ruffled merely on the surface, and thus to become self-centred and more or less impervious to the effect of the root changes which are taking place elsewhere. The result is that England has, in working out her destiny, missed the quality of a certain plasticity which would have enormously contributed to her progress. She is confessedly hard to move; if she could have profited more by the lessons taught to Europe in the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, she would have learned to be more adaptable.

The French Revolution may be described as a sudden bursting forth of concealed forces with such violence that they could not be controlled. The cry of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*, intoxicated the nation, and a welter of blood was the immediate result. Then followed the unprecedented successes of France in her campaigns against Europe, and with the arrival of the man —Napoleon—practically the complete dominance of Europe, which transformed it into a continent of Nations from practically an inchoate mass of States. The suffering, the terror, the fear, the abandonment of religion, all these things England escaped; it may be said that, as far as it was humanly possible, they did not touch her. Her people still maintained their religion, and save for a very small minority, among whom were a few poets, remained uninfluenced by, and in many cases ignorant of, the purport of the great events shaping themselves beyond her shores.

But those countries which were in the thick of the battle had problems to wrestle with, ideals to strive for. The Emperor Napoleon called the English in contempt "a nation of shopkeepers," and neither the French Revolution nor the Napoleonic Wars had the effect of removing that reproach. The great middle class of England, its very backbone, full of all the virtues, still remained stolid and stodgy, still were without *imagination*.

Imagination makes for greatness; it may, when distorted, lead to the depths, but it may, when rightly used, lead to the heights. This quality, the quick succession of events of a hundred years ago developed in Europe to a large extent. It has brought forth, in its better aspects, great painters, great writers, great actors, great philosophers, great statesmen from all classes in the countries of Europe—whereas in these England has been singularly lacking during the last century. She has had statesmen, but mostly from the aristocratic class, which fortunately has some imagination as well as, or because of, the support of heredity. The Scottish race, with its Keltic blood, has produced some philosophers; the Irish for the same reason some great soldiers. But taken all round, Britain has remained bourgeois—commercial; intense and vivid life has not played through her. She has had all the advantages that freedom could give her, but has not had the imagination to value those advantages at a level higher than that of commercial prosperity.

Still these three qualities, love of liberty, love of justice, and love of country have remained with, and have been recognised as belonging to, England. An oppressed foreign nation will turn to her for help, for she is "dear for her reputation, through the world". Her justice is proverbial; true, mistakes have been made, but taken all in all, she has justified her reputation. At times she has risen to great heights, as for instance in the abolition of the Slave Trade, to secure which she sacrificed many temporal possessions in order to establish an eternal right. Set against this the disastrous policy pursued against America, until that country, goaded beyond endurance, took the law into its own hands and gained its independence.

England took this lesson seriously to heart. We see Colony after Colony self-governing now—even South Africa. Is she going to break her reputation on India?

The Indian student of English history naturally presumes that the only thing that England can do to

be true to herself is to grant Self-Government to a country proved loyal, and peopled with men capable of governing. India has waited patiently for nearly sixty years; she has established a responsible body of men in her National Congress, who represent in a calm and balanced manner the needs and aspirations of their country; and yet, as the years go on, the hopeful policy started in 1858 seems to be taking a retrograde course instead of marching forward.

"What is happening to England?" the student of history may well ask. She has been true to her traditions in the present War, and in that India is whole-heartedly with her, for she is defending the oppressed. That is good. But there are other problems to be solved in which her attitude is doubtful, and although every one has, as is fitting, put away for the moment private grievances to secure a great right, yet the time will come when these grievances have to be redressed.

England has progressed far in her efforts to secure liberty and justice for all, but not yet far enough. She has to learn to break down the barriers of class, creed, sex and colour more thoroughly than she has hitherto done. There is the war between capital and labour to be waged and ended in an amicable peace. A true religious tolerance is yet to be established. There is the woman's question still awaiting settlement, and lastly, there is the problem of colour. If one takes the trouble to read the reports of the Indian National Congress, or even just glances through the Resolutions passed at the various Congresses—still unrealised—one learns how just demands have been denied to India. It is a sad record, and it forms a black page in the Empire's history.

If only the English people could be roused as they were over the Slave Trade, if only they could realise the condition of India, then the love of liberty and justice, that is theirs by right of birth, would surely surge in their hearts and they would demand that India should be given Self-Government.

It may be possible. The English conscience is again awake; the student of history looks forward with the hope that the lessons of the War will not be fruitless and that India's self-sacrifice, without thought of reward, may not be in vain. But the Indians must not cease to work for their freedom. No mistaken ideas of loyalty must hold them back from making demands, while the Colonies are calmly settling *their* terms. That would be foolishness and—though perhaps a divine foolishness—might, probably would, be misunderstood.

Still one wonders, if it should happen that the lessons of the War are not learned by England, will she, by any chance, through greed of gold or prejudice of colour, repeat the mistake with India that she made with America? A great chance is given her to vindicate, by her application of them, her claims to liberty and justice. Will she take it or will she refuse?

IV

THE NEED FOR EDUCATION

In the march of a country towards liberty, a factor which is essential is Education. In modern days this subject has claimed a good deal of thought, and most rightly so, because on it largely depends the national life.

A country in which only the rich can obtain education, may produce good men, who will form the governing class, but these few will constitute an oligarchy which will dominate the people, and their opinion will be presumed to be the opinion of the nation at large, an absolutely erroneous conclusion.

It is undoubtedly true—profoundly so—that "the autocracy of the wise is the salvation of the foolish," but one of the first actions of the truly wise will be to see that every opportunity is given to develop wisdom as far as possible in the foolish, and to bestow the enlightenment of education on each individual according to the measure of his capacity, in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance.

Education, in a civilised country, is the natural right of every son and daughter of that country, and it is the duty of every educated person to do what he can to secure the bestowal of that right. In plain words, every child must have a chance. Education must necessarily be graded, the intellectual capacity of the slum child not being equal to that of the child of the

well-to-do, but a certain average minimum should be given to all.

Why? Firstly because it is the right of the individual; secondly because it is a national duty and to the national advantage so to do. The second reason will be the most appealing. Individual rights are not universally respected, and a more selfish argument will often gain a hearing. It is taken for granted that the aim and object of every living nation is to progress and to improve itself. It is, therefore, obviously to the advantage of such a nation that each unit thereof should possess a certain amount of intelligence. This intelligence each individual can put into any work he may happen to do, and thus secure better results. One does not want in a nation a percentage of its population to be but a step removed from trained or—in some cases—untrained animals. By just so much is its initiative checked, and initiative is essential to progress. So much for the selfish point of view. If we trespass on to the ground of morality, we see that universal education is a national responsibility. The Mother has a duty towards her children, and the more backward they are, the more she should try to remedy their defects, and fit them as far as possible to cope with life, by giving to them a suitable education. It is the Mother's duty to see that her family are a credit to her.

Education is the right of the individual. This is the reason which will appeal to the altruist. Every man or woman who has enjoyed the fruits of education must feel that to withhold altogether from others the light he or she has gained, is an impossible attitude. A child is born into the world. Nobody disputes the natural right of that child to have food. If that child dies of starvation there is a wrong somewhere. But the child has also a brain which has to be developed, and the way in which this is done is by education. It is therefore his inalienable right that the brain, as well as the stomach, should be fed, and if the brain be not fed, and the child be left to grow up in ignorance, a

wrong equal to that of starvation is committed. No one, I think, now-a-days, would wilfully deny food to a child and callously let it die for want of nourishment; yet many, even to-day, go calmly about the world without a murmur, seeing hundreds of children whose brains are becoming atrophied through want of mental food. And this sad state of affairs has not arisen through deliberate cruelty, but merely from want of thought.

The conscience, however, of nations and individuals is beginning to be awakened, and now no intelligent person will be found seriously to oppose universal education. A few selfish people there may be who will argue that to educate the masses is dangerous; that it gives the lower classes "ideas". That may be so —granted that it is so—but it is no real argument. The mother does not refuse to give her baby milk because the child when he grows up *may turn out* to be a profligate. It is her business to give to it the proper nourishment. It is the business of the State to see that the child's brain is fed in as judicious a manner as possible, whatever the results may be. The child has the right to food and education, even though he has no voice to demand them. It is equally true that afterwards he has duties to perform, but that has nothing to do with the question on hand.

In the United Kingdom and in many other countries there is the system of Compulsory Primary Education. Individual parents are not always careful of, or have not the facilities for, the education of their children, so the great Parent—the State—steps in and says: "So much education your children must have." The smaller parents oftentimes object for various reasons, but the State is rightly inexorable.

But in India this is, alas, not so. In few countries in the world is there such a passion for education—and this for two reasons; the one utilitarian, for unless the poor but well-born boy can get education up to a certain point, all suitable methods of livelihood are closed to him. But the other, and more ideal one, is that in

India there is a genuine love for learning for its own sake, that will not be checked. These reasons apply mainly to the children of respectable parents. The poverty of India is so great, that the fathers, however willing, are often quite unable to pay the school and college fees of their sons. Consequently, before a term begins, youths go about, asking from those who look as if they might have a rupee or two to spare, for some contribution towards their education. This system, in the twentieth century, is abominable, but here almost inevitable; and while it exists it is quite clear that there is room for much fraud. It is a question which our educationists should take seriously in hand.

But what of the millions of the totally uneducated in India? What is to be done for them? Some organised system of compulsory education must be put into motion that at least every child shall be able to read and write in his own vernacular. That there should still be the necessity for a "thumb mark" instead of the signature of a grown-up person, is a fact to be deplored—but it is one that has to be faced.

If India is to be a free nation, the problem of education is one of the most important with which she has to grapple. If the Government cannot see its way, either through lack of funds or through indifference, to secure the education up to a suitable point of every Indian, from Brahmana to Panchama, it is incumbent on every loyal son and daughter of India to give and do what he or she can for its furtherance in this land. India can never advance far on the way towards real liberty until her sons *and daughters* are educated. You may give her Home Rule and thus enable her to promote the education of her children; a great step forward will thus have been taken, but her true liberty will not be realised until she has universal and if necessary—and for a long time it will be necessary—compulsory education.

For education India should work, as no other country has worked, since she numbers amongst her people millions of Hindus, in whose religion is taught the

doctrine of reincarnation. The West, holding that the child lives, grows to old age and dies, never to return to earth again, still believes in the inherent right of that child to education. Much more so should those who hold that, in the child, dwells the reincarnating ego, in which is stored up the memory of many births, and the faculties gained through lives of struggle. These faculties have to be drawn out (*educere*) from the child through the physical medium of his brain, and it is to this process of "drawing out," we rightly give the name of education. In India, of all lands, because there the doctrine of reincarnation is held, education should as freely be given to girls as to boys, for the reincarnating ego is sexless, and chooses the physical vehicle merely for the sake of experience which it wishes to gain. The West, not holding the doctrine of reincarnation, educates its girls—yet in the East many parents, who might do so, refrain from giving to them the education which is as much their right as that of the boys, and in the life of a nation, as we shall see later on, women have a different part to play from that of the men, but one equally as important.

No true lover of India, therefore, can oppose any scheme which will develop educational facilities in this country. There are many difficulties to be contended against, practical as well as religious, but these have not been touched upon here.

The problem is difficult and complicated, but the principle of universal education is true, and for the realisation of this principle India must fight.

V

THE POSITION OF WOMEN

ALL the world over the position of women is becoming a problem which demands a solution, and it is a problem which the free States of the future must face. The so-called "free" nations of the present are grappling with it, and in England the Suffragette Movement is a sign of the times. The day has passed of the complete dominance of man: people are beginning to realise that women have an important part to play in the building of a nation and that they must be given every opportunity and facility to play that part as well as possible.

The mere fact that women, by reason of their physical constitution, bear the sons and daughters of a nation, is of sufficient importance surely to gain for them an assured position. The latest studies in heredity—and who can now afford to neglect the results of science?—show us that the child partakes of the nature of both father and mother. Further, for the first few years of its life, it is largely under the care of the mother. If she be an ignorant and incapable woman, the child's life is handicapped from its beginning.

This is generally recognised now-a-days, and every nation, struggling to be free, must regard each of its girls as a potential mother, who will bear to that nation sons worthy of it. We have only to glance back to the history of Rome, and read of the mother of the Gracchi, or of the mother of Coriolanus, to see

what an enormous influence women have had in the making of a nation.

But that the women of the nation are to be regarded only in the light of potential mothers, is not a correct view. Truly, in economic crises, such as the present War, when the manhood of many nations is being struck down ruthlessly, women because of their child-bearing quality become of enormous importance in order to perpetuate the race; but their value in this respect will depend largely on their physique, their education, their public spirit; and it is because of these qualities being largely present in British women, that there is hope for the future sons of Britain, albeit the flower of its manhood has been slain on the battle-field.

In normal times, however, when things are going on smoothly, other factors come into consideration. The women in the West have begun to realise themselves, and to regard sex rather as a matter of accident than in any other way; and the economic conditions of countries in the West have forced women to go out into the world in open competition with men, in order to earn their daily bread. The head of the modern woman is not so full of marriage, as was that of her sister one hundred years ago. Modern conditions have forced her into practicality, and in most countries the number of women being greater than that of men, marriage for her is not a foregone conclusion. Consequently, conditions have thrown the modern woman back on her own resources, and to a large extent she has become independent. This new condition of affairs has of course caused much friction and resulted in what may be termed "the sex war," which is not strictly speaking war at all, but rather a hurried process of readjustment between the two sexes; for fundamentally they cannot be at war with each other, since they are complementary to one another.

The women of the West do not now-a-days limit their vision to the bringing up of a family. They

acknowledge quite frankly that duty, but they say: "We can do more." Still further, woman will not any longer consider marriage as an end in itself. If she cannot find a husband who suits her, she will rather face the world and earn her bread than lose her independence.

In the gaining of this independence, woman has necessarily had to broaden her conceptions as to what were for a long time considered to be "womanly occupations". She has had to come into competition with man, and in competition with man, woman has done well. She has gained the highest honours at Universities, she has shown great organising qualities, she has proved herself quick and apt at office work—steady, reliable, patient and painstaking. She cannot help the cry that she is taking the men's work away from them. She must live, and if the wage that her employer gives her is less than just, less than a man would take, she perforce takes it—but also *thinks*!

Women have begun to think for themselves; they no longer passively accept the *dicta* of men; in the domain of morality they no longer acknowledge one law for the man, and a different and far narrower law for the woman. And because they have begun to think, a few of the braver souls have begun to act on behalf of their sex, and are endeavouring to define the sphere of woman as God meant it to be defined, and not as man has found it convenient to define it.

And to what does this new movement amongst women tend? Towards liberty. No longer do they want to be petted and caressed, and yet be considered as irresponsible beings, having everything arranged for them, as it may please man to arrange. They feel that they have a duty to perform to the nation apart from, and irrespective of, child-bearing, and in the West, in every department of life, they are justifying themselves by their magnificent capabilities. They are no longer the toys, dearly beloved it may be and carefully cherished, of men; they are helpmates.

In India the great lack from which the women suffer is education. In former times, before the spread of western education, women were skilled in many arts, and well versed in the history and religion of their country; but with the advent of the West and the new education, the women have suffered; for their husbands and menfolk have abandoned old methods for new, and the education which the Indian woman of old enjoyed has now fallen very much into disuse. So with neither the old nor the new education, the Indian woman of to-day cannot occupy the place she ought to occupy with her husband. She is not his companion intellectually. She is the mother of his children, it is true, but she has not the training that the mother of the children of Young India should have—a vital point for the India that is to be. When education spreads generally among the women of India, what developments will occur is a matter for speculation, but although the daughters of India, by reason of a gentler and more devotional character than their western sisters, may never realise their freedom by the same methods, yet their freedom must be obtained.

India longs for freedom. She must free her women from the bonds of ignorance first, and fit them by education and experience to become useful members of Society. To bear children, and serve the husband with meals, carefully and lovingly cooked, are not intellectual occupations—and woman has intellect. She must meet her husband on the intellectual plane, and though perhaps he will be her superior there, she can save him from many an intellectual pitfall by the exercise of her gift of intuition. Her household duties need not be the less well performed because she has other and wider interests. They will be all the better performed. The devotion of ignorance may be beautiful, but it is not to be compared in loveliness with the devotion of knowledge.

India is beginning to see that something must be done for her women. The Indian man, in certain parts of the country, still regards her from a superior

standpoint and wonders why, if she is a good cook and bears her husband many sons, anything more should be required of her. Were all the men of India of such a type, India would not deserve her freedom—but they are not so. As in every great movement for freedom, so also in this there are many difficulties to be encountered, many problems to be solved, but the first thing that India has to do is to educate her women, and perhaps, these women, when educated, will take the burden from off the men's shoulders, and decide for themselves what work they shall do for the freedom and betterment of their Motherland in the future.

VI

AN INTERESTING PARALLEL

As at the beginning of the nineteenth, so in the early years of this century, the idea of liberty seems to have taken hold of the minds of men. The French Revolution was the outcome of the oppression of the lower classes by the aristocrats, and its result was to show to the world at large that the people, as such, have rights. In all countries of the West the establishment of these rights is being worked out with a gradual but inevitable persistence. The country which lagged behind, Russia, with the impetus of the present War is now making rapid amends for past injuries, and her future is one of the greatest interest. In England where the freedom of the subject has been an example to the world, where, though class distinctions existed as they must ever exist, there has been more justice shown to the people on the whole than in other countries, a new problem began to arise some fifty or sixty years ago.

This new problem was revolutionary in the extreme. Women, as apart from men, were beginning to demand freedom. Up till then freedom was a thing for which men alone struggled, their womenfolk participating in their failures or successes to just such an extent as the men chose. But the idea of freedom had begun to grip the minds of women, and at first a few, later more, began to voice that idea very quietly, but with a conviction that told. I do not know that at the very first the symbol of liberty to which these women

clung was "the vote," but not many years passed before they claimed a right to have a "say in the affairs of the country," to be able to voice their opinions, in the only effective way, regarding the Government of their country, which taxes them, but refuses representation.

So quietly did these first suffragists work that really practically nothing was known of them by the general public. They held drawing-room meetings, they talked to politicians when opportunity offered, they exercised what influence they could, they employed every constitutional means they could—but they did not make a noise. Consequently the powers that be, knowing that the general public were ignorant of the hopes of these women pioneers, were civil, accommodating —but little was done. Then came the era of the militant suffragette. The history of her evolution is not very surprising. Her quieter sisters of the years gone by had obtained certain privileges; women were beginning to serve on Boards and Committees, and were gaining practical experience. But the progress was too slow. Suddenly a few women decided that things must go on faster. They began to agitate. "Votes for Women" was written in white chalk on the pavements of the great cities; meetings were interrupted; women got sent to prison. At last the man in the street awoke to the fact that *women wanted the vote.* Then came the martyrdom of many brave women—the torture of forcible feeding, the horrors of prison life, the jeers of the mob, the rough handling very often of the crowds when they attempted to speak. They cared nothing for that; their object was to show to the people that they wanted the vote, and their strongest argument, as it seems to me, was that it was their *right* to have it. They had shown by their work, their unity, their purpose, their endurance, their organisations—witness their wonderful processions, and their splendidly controlled and managed societies—that women were no longer poor, weak, dependent creatures, that they had rights of their own, that there were

things which they could do more effectively than men, especially in problems regarding their own sex. But even in 1915, despite all their struggles, they have not the vote, nor are they "persons" in the eyes of the law.

And what is the reception these women have met with from the Government? Checks in every direction. Bills have been introduced by private members, only to be rejected. Deputations have not been received. Promises of an elusive character have been made, only to be broken. The result has been, as was only to be expected, that the women have ceased to trust the politicians, are no longer deceived by fair promises, will no more put up with shilly-shallying, will not rest until they see that something is done. That was the position before the War. At the time of the great danger to their country, the women ceased every hostile demonstration in order to succour a cause dear to their hearts, one for which they had been struggling for the last fifteen years—the struggle of moral right against physical might.

This great principle, by reason of the violation of Belgian territory, the British people realised and acted at once in order to maintain. That a State was small, and therefore less able to defend itself against an enemy, was no reason why it should not exist independently and have all the rights of a big State. Such rights were its moral inheritance. There is a law higher than that of physical force, there is a moral law to be upheld which Might must not be allowed to overrule. So England went to war on behalf of this principle, although when its women urged that very same principle, the Government, instead of defending, oppressed them; this very same principle in India the Government have paltered with, in theory appearing to recognise it, in practice rejecting it. There is one thing alone which may explain these glaring cases of inconsistency. In the case of the War, the country, to a man, was with the Government, because to a large extent they knew the facts. These were put forward

well. But facts about the women's movement have been suppressed when it was desirable. The daily papers have boycotted the question, save where some "disgraceful act of militancy" has been committed which has been recorded and used as a lever against the women's cause. Still less do the people of England know of India. What have they been allowed to know? Have Indian thought and opinion been brought prominently before them? But the Government knows the facts.

Similar to that of the suffragettes, only of longer duration, has been India's struggle for freedom. The fair prospects of the Proclamation of 1858 are fading, if they have not completely faded, out of existence. The statesmen of sixty years ago were statesmen who really wished that the rule of England in India should be conducted with the main idea of the Indians governing their own country, at no distant date. But as time goes on, especially during the last fifteen years, check after check has been put on India's progress.

India is not ready for Self-Government? The National Congress is a complete answer to the question. Is India's loyalty to the British Crown doubted? The present War is a sufficient guarantee. Despite Press Acts, Arms Acts, prohibitive salt taxes, disabilities in the Army, obstruction to Simultaneous Examinations for the Civil Service, despite all these things and numerous others, India has remained loyal, though it seems to me that every opportunity has been given to her to be disloyal. She has shown by every means in her power that she wants Self-Government under the Imperial Throne, and to that Self-Government she has the right. It is as a right she now looks for it. It is no longer a "boon".

It is interesting, this similarity between India's struggle for freedom and the women's struggle for the symbol of their liberty, the vote; for the same principle underlies both—the right of individual existence. Not only are the cases similar, but the treatment meted

out by Government is practically parallel—treatment directly contrary to the spirit of freedom, The world is moving forward rapidly now, and the War is teaching many lessons, which the countries of Europe are learning through pain. Yet England, whose watch-word is freedom, who sees the magnificent behaviour and self-sacrifice of her women, who witnesses the untarnished loyalty of India, and the heroic conduct of her soldiers on the battle-field—still hesitates. The very principle she upholds in the case of a foreign nation, she rejects in the case of her women, and a nation under her protection. She cannot for ever play with principles; the fact that she as a country has once realised what is right forbids her from sinning a second time on the plea of ignorance, for then the moral law which she has recognised once will react on her, and take from her hands the Standard of Liberty which for centuries she has proudly held, and which, unless she remains wilfully blind to-day, she may hold for centuries to come.

VII

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

ONE of the most important steps that a State can take towards freedom is to recognise the right of each of its individual members to believe what he or she likes, and to secure for them, in the pursuance of such belief, equal advantages.

Belief, as such, is free. It cannot be controlled, although its outward expression may be checked; for this we have only to turn to the history of the West and read of the religious persecutions in the various countries, reaching a veritable climax in the Spanish Inquisition and stretching down the centuries.

Recognising that faith is a matter beyond control, it is surely the duty of the Government of a State as far as possible to exercise a wide tolerance, not favouring one creed as against another, but treating all alike impartially.

Now this toleration is a thing that is easy to talk of, but it is very difficult of realisation, even in the twentieth century. The true attitude of toleration, which spells freedom, is still rare among humanity. Most men tend to think that their way of belief is essentially the best, and are apt to foregather with those who hold the same creed. An idea of separation comes into being; the Pharisaical spirit: "Thank God I am not as other men," is brought to birth. Rarely is found the man who recognises that Truth itself is so tremendous, so beyond the conception of the human

brain, that only fragments of it can enter our consciousness, that we can only see it partially, and that our brother looking at the same Truth is translating his vision as he sees it in the way in which it presents itself to him.

It is in the newer religions that intolerance has found so large a place. Hinduism with its wonderful ritual and philosophy is content not to worry about alien faiths, but within even its pale there are many sad differences which, it seems to an outsider, might be got rid of with a little tolerance. In Christianity intolerance is a very much marked characteristic, that religion considering itself quite "a thing apart," as regards other religions: within its own borders also there is much disagreement, dissension, and strife. It may be remembered that Miss Marie Corelli dedicated her *Master Christian* "to all Churches who quarrel in the name of Christ". This dedication contained a sting which was not altogether unmerited.

One would think that now-a-days a man might be left in peace to worship as he liked, without the interference of his neighbours, but it is not so—practically. In the West bitter feelings still exist between the different sects of Christians and advantages are given to one sect as against another. The idea that Christianity, *i.e.*, the Christian religion as a whole, is the one, only, and final presentment of Truth is still widely spread, although intelligent men and women have long revolted against such a narrow view, and people, generally speaking, are becoming impatient of such bigoted claims. Despite this we still find missions, largely supported by the devout, sent forth to the different non-Christian countries in the world to convert what is known as "the heathen".

There is, of course, no objection to a man preaching what he believes to be true, but surely there is objection to his attempting to enforce his belief on other people. That is practically what the Christian missionary tries to do. The arrogant idea of the narrow

Christian that his religion is the only one, inspires the missioner with a mistaken zeal to save the souls of those who "bow down to wood and stone". He may do much good social and educational work, but it is all subordinate to his central plan—to gain converts to his religion. That is, if I may say so, the *raison d'être* of his profession.

The attitude of a true missioner should be so to live the life of his religion that others around him are attracted by his gentle example to follow the teaching which has made him what he is. Emerson's words,

> Nor knowest thou what argument
> Thy life to thy neighbour's creed hath lent,

still hold good. True tolerance does not prevent a man holding definite opinions of his own; but it does insist that he should pay regard to the opinions of other people, and therefore the proselytising attitude really militates against tolerance, for it in reality attempts to gain control over the faith of another human being, and although faith cannot be controlled, its free expression may be checked in various ways.

The missionary problem in India is a very difficult one. The missionaries have done a great work in education, and they have also done much for the Depressed Classes, which have been neglected by Indians themselves. But they teach a religion alien to the traditions of India, a religion foreign to her growth. For, generally speaking, the religion followed by a people is the best for that people's development and progress, being especially suited to its temperament. There are here and there of course cases of individuals changing their faith, but for the general mass of the nation the type of religion that is found there is the best for them.

In India, all the different religions are allowed to flourish unmolested, but the Government must take especial care that no favour should be shown to one

as against another—Christianity as against Hinduism or Muhammadanism. Even from a standpoint of worldly justice this would hold good here in the case of religious teaching in schools, seeing that a vast sum of the money now spent on education comes from the pockets of Indians who are non-Christians, and cannot possibly wish that their children should be trained in an alien religion. But the problem of education and religion is "another story," and does not find a place in this chapter.

Impartiality is a rare virtue, but it must be found in a nation which is to be free. Mutual respect for differing opinions must be inculcated into the youth of such a nation. It does not matter whether a man be Hindu, Muhammadan, Parsi, Christian, Buddhist —all the religions have their place. What really matters is that the children --the future builders of the Nation—shall gain an attitude of true tolerance.

Once that is gained a great many of the non-essentials, which have grown round the different religions, will be done away with. The separative lines which are drawn between the different faiths will become fainter and ever fainter as time goes on. People will tend to take united action on points on which they agree, and difference of private beliefs will no longer be an object of suspicion. A larger view of religion will gradually arise, and the barriers of caste and creed must in their narrowed form inevitably break down.

Let India be the foremost in teaching this true tolerance—the tolerance of detachment, not the tolerance of indifference—and with its realisation will come the dawn of the realisation of the unity which underlies the diversity, the knowledge of which, once gained, obliterates for ever the differences and distinctions which man has set up against his fellow-man throughout the ages of the past.

VIII

UNITY

R. L. STEVENSON once wrote: "To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour." To those who are struggling for freedom, who see "as in a glass darkly" the vision of the India that will be, who press on courageously towards the ideal, these words are inspiring. For they contain within them the essence of unselfishness. The glorious company of the Pioneers may not ever wear the laurel crown of victory, but theirs is the privilege of making the road by which future generations shall tread into the promised land and enjoy the fruits thereof. The pioneers realise this to a certain extent; if they do not, their work will lack much in quality. But in the pursuance of a common ideal, the element of selfishness enters into the best of us. The spirit of individuality asserts itself in a way that will not be denied, and though individuality is an asset of great value, yet carried to excess it may mar the work.

One thing that must be always borne in mind is that we are struggling towards one ideal—towards Liberty. India must be free, and every individual effort must be directed to the accomplishment of that object. But individual efforts must be used as a stepping-stone to attainment. We must not be so narrowed, so bigoted, that we insist on carrying out our own particular plan—because we think it best—when by doing so we may bring hindrance to the cause as a whole. The individuality should be employed as a

tool, and must ever be held subordinate to the ideal. Co-operation in the acccomplishment of the great work is a necessary factor.

No one single man can achieve by himself a nation's liberty. He may form the figure round which that hope is centred, but others must help. All must be inspired by the ideal, and all must work for it one-pointedly and unitedly.

"Union is strength." If a considerable body of men make up their minds that they want a thing, and are determined to have it—not for themselves, but for the good of humanity—that thing will come in time. Unity of aim is the great force which urges them on. Now, generally speaking, people are not united. There are differences of race, caste, creed, sex, colour —all of which have their own special peculiarities and idiosyncracies. Each has its own axe to grind, and is apt to guide its actions with a view to certain special advantages it will obtain as, step by step, Liberty is gradually realised. Thus the element of selfishness enters, and the path towards the goal is harder to traverse.

In the march towards Liberty, all these differences must be thrown aside. India is a land of many races, of many beliefs, all of which must be welded into one whole, united in the ideal of Liberty. Once gained, the private differences may be settled, but until secured, they must be put aside. If we look to the West we find an example of what I mean in the Suffragette Movement in England. The women of England are struggling towards citizenship, and many societies have been formed, differing in their methods, but united in their demand. They know that when they attain to citizenship they will be able to do much for their sex and their country, and in their progress towards it, they have done what they could, here a little, there a little; but they have never let anything interfere with the goal they have in view. Because they are filled with an unselfish motive, they have dropped,

to a wonderful degree, personal differences and prejudices. Religious differences are forgiven in the struggle for the great ideal. Differences of class are obliterated, and the daughters of the highest in the land work side by side with the poor working women.

It had always been supposed that women could not work together. The Suffragette Movement has shown the world that they can.

So the pioneers in India must work towards their goal in the spirit of co-operation, and as it is necessary for the goal to have a label, the demand is made for Home Rule for India. That is the outer husk of the demand, just as the vote is in reality but a symbol of the hopes and dreams of these women who have suffered imprisonment or torture on behalf of their sex.

Home Rule for India means that Indians will settle their own affairs--that they will be able to work for the good of their people, bringing to bear their knowledge of their countrymen in all problems. But it means more. It means the consolidation of different peoples and races into one Nationality. It means, in the years that lie in front of us, that India, realising her Nationhood, will of her own self, work out her liberty. For the attainment of Home Rule is but one of the first steps, albeit a very necessary one, towards that True Liberty which comes from within, which pulses from birth in the heart of every child of the nation, is realised in every citizen, man and woman, of the nation, is an inherent right that is theirs of spiritual inheritance, a right, no longer checked, as now, by man-made laws and man-made institutions.

IX

INDIA'S DHARMA

In the foregoing chapters I have endeavoured to outline some of the points which must be studied if a nation is to be free—especially with regard to India. The first step for her is to gain political liberty, and towards that attainment the best in her land are working heart and soul. They see with a true vision that the country must be governed by its own people. The understanding that is necessary is only really possessed by the sons of the soil. No foreigner, perhaps, however sympathetic, however wise, can quite understand, and so it is that India must have her own sons to govern her. And this the wisest of the foreigners would unhesitatingly admit; for the really great among men are the most ready to realise their limitations, and are the most willing to relinquish into other hands the work that it is not in their power to perform so successfully.

This was the spirit of those who helped in the framing of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. Their aim was to help, to guide as far as might be, do what rough work they could, and then leave the rest to the Indians themselves, in whom alone lay the real faculty for governing their country. Such was the wise spirit in which the statesmen of sixty years ago worked, and it is this spirit which the bureaucracy of to-day is endeavouring to stifle. But the spirit of Liberty cannot be stifled; it may only be for a time repressed, gaining by the repression greater strength to burst

forth again with added vigour. England cannot inculcate into an alien nation her ideals of liberty and justice, and then when she has taught them, and her pupil has eagerly grasped at them, refuse, or strive to refuse, to allow that pupil to act on them. If she does so, can she expect the pupil to remain quiet?

It is true that India has remained quiet—that is, she has not actively rebelled—but she is acutely conscious that the hopes of sixty years ago on which she built so much remain practically unfulfilled. So the Congress came to birth and, year by year, resolution after resolution has been passed, asking for redress of crying grievances and meeting with very little response. From now onwards India will agitate, agitate, agitate, but constitutionally. She is determined to have her own way at last, and insist on having the rights that were promised to her.

But why has she waited so long? Why has she remained so quiet under an alien rule? Lastly, why, in England's peril, has she come forward with men and money, almost beseeching England to receive them, in order to aid a country which has for decades shelved her just claims?

Perhaps the truest answer to this question would be that the Indians have appreciated the rule of the English despite its many drawbacks and injustices. They have understood for what England really stands —Liberty and Justice. They have penetrated the outer shell of the Englishman, pierced through the outer reserve, and seen something they respect and revere. But this shell is hard to break, and year by year it seems to be growing more impenetrable.

The ideals for which England has striven shine forth in the pages of her history and her literature, but these ideals have been realised not so much through her Governments, as through the determination of the people as a whole, whose will, at the last extremity, must sway the Government. Once get the British

Nation convinced of the rightness of a thing, and that thing will be accomplished. The abolition of the Slave Trade was a case in point. Home Rule for India will be another. But these "intuitions" of a nation imply sacrifice, involve material loss, and selfish considerations come into play.

In the first chapter, I tried to show how largely, with regard to the treatment of India, the theory differed from the practice; and to-day the theory seems to be becoming like an elastic band stretched tight almost to breaking point. Is England frankly going to declare: "We were wrong. We intended to train the Indians for Self-rule, but we find that it will cost us too much, and so we have changed our policy"? Or is she going to be loyal to her truer self and say: "We have always upheld Liberty. We have given all our Colonies their independence. It is time now to redeem our pledges of 1858 and give to India the Home Rule she longs for"?

These questions have yet to be answered, but the time is coming for an answer one way or the other; an answer will be demanded. It is impossible in the nature of things to delay it for long by a dilatory policy. The issue must be stated clearly, and all the signs point to the decision in the near future.

India wonders why, when she is doing all she can to show her love for Britain, the response she receives is one of repression. What more can she do? She offers more men for the War, they are not accepted; she gives of her wealth, and yet is not trusted.

After all these years there is still lack of understanding between the nations. India with her spiritual vision, sees the England of her ideals, and with eyes bent on that vision, dreams of her freedom. But England, more active, more material, looks rather on the things of earth and sacrifices her spiritual service other material needs. The aims of the two countries are so different that they ought not to come into

collision—rather they should be complementary. Surely it is not a case of pure accident that the fortunes of England and India have been brought so closely together. Why is it, one asks oneself, that the most spiritual country in the world should be linked with the foremost commercial country of the West —should be a part of the great British Empire?

The answer to this question seems to me to be without doubt that both countries can teach each other valuable lessons, which otherwise they could not have learned.

The spirituality of India, so deeply rooted in that ancient land for long ages, needs somewhat of the physical vitality of the West to prevent its degenerating into an ineffective and vague state of dreaminess. Britain's activities need to be placed more directly under true spiritual guidance, to prevent their being turned towards purely materialistic ends. In a word, India must become actively spiritual, and Britain has to learn the lesson of spiritual activity. Then, and then only, it seems to me, will the two countries be truly harmonised. To gain this desired end is not the work of a day, a year; it may take centuries before the perfect adjustment is realised, it may take but a short time, but the currents must be set working in the right direction at once. If Britain is to withdraw the vitality she can pour into India, to some other country in the West, maybe, an opportunity will be given to undertake the task she has failed to perform. Those who look into the future, and see the danger of failure, the danger of a glorious combination being broken, realise the priceless opportunity of the present when a binding link may be formed which cannot be severed, and which will last through the ages till the great mission of either country is fulfilled. Thus, any attempt to check the activities of India, to repress the growing feeling of Nationality is regarded by them as a retrograde and dangerous step; for England has inspired India with her vitality, and though she can repress, she cannot take away what she has given.

India recognises with gratitude what England has already given, but with her spiritual vision she sees more clearly the end. Her spirituality is even now active, and seeks expression, and it is this effort of expression at the present day which is so misunderstood. A change in the attitude of India has so gradually, almost imperceptibly, come about, that it has not been realised. India is fulfilling her dharma. She has reached a further stage in her spiritual evolution. Time was when the spiritual impulse bade her sacrifice everything, bade her bear meekly all rebuffs, bade her yield everything without demur. This attitude was recognised and eagerly traded on by invading powers. But now it is passing away. India has learned the necessary lessons from it, and has entered on a new and more glorious phase. She feels within her the pulsation of a new life, the faint stirrings of the New India, to be born in the near future, and she recognises that the hour is about to be struck for the fruitage of her sacrifice. No longer is she to be trodden down because of her self-surrender. She is passing as it were, from death to life. From Self-sacrifice through Self-expression to Self-fulfilment—that is her path. And in the working out of her destiny she may no longer in the present suffer the hindrances that it was her duty to submit to in the past. So her attitude changes day by day, and England misunderstands, as is perhaps natural, and, despite every proof that India can show of her loyalty, distrusts. If England has not the intuition to grasp the significance of the change that is passing before her eyes, she must be made to understand.

India does not want to extend her territory; she does not demand colossal wealth beyond her needs; she wants to realise on her soil ideals that by silent precept may influence the rest of the world. Not hers the hand to rule Empires, but hers the strength and spirituality to inspire and guide Emperors. But in order to accomplish this she must at least have the management of her own affairs. She must be free

within her own territorial boundaries. The people of India must, as part of the Empire, have the ordinary rights of citizens of the Empire not only in name but in reality. No disabilities must be placed on Indians as such, and the possessions of the Motherland must not be exploited as a source of wealth to other parts of the Empire. Probably at first with Home Rule, she may make mistakes, but she must learn by these mistakes to realise herself. As she realises herself, more and more will her true spirituality envelop the world bringing a blessing to all nations and all lands.

It is England's privilege and opportunity now to take the first steps towards this glorious end. If she but give royally, she will receive royally more than a thousandfold of what she has given. If she refuse—? but she cannot refuse, if only she will understand. She does not understand as yet, but the lessons of the War, the strenuous activities in India surely will open her eyes. Nearly sixty years ago, the way towards the goal was roughly sketched by the intuition of her statesmen. The clouds now lie low and hide the path, but soon they must rise and the way will be plain again. Meanwhile Britain has her pledged word to redeem. Let her act on the ideal for which she is fighting now: "Honour above everything," and thus acting in faith, without hope of reward, she will leave behind her the darkness that obscures, and hand-in-hand she and India will pass through the brilliant sunlight to the feet of the Goddess—LIBERTY.

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